

LITERARY NOTES.

A series of representative essays on questions of the day are to be edited by Mr. Titus M. Coan and published by G. P. Putnam's Sons under the title of "Topics of the Time." Successive volumes will be devoted to collections of current papers on social problems, questions of belief, international issues and scientific progress. Studies in literature, in history and in biography will be included in the series, the first two volumes of which—"Studies in Biography" and "Social Problems"—will be ready next month.

The fact that Coleridge has not yet found a place in the English Men of Letters series is deemed astonishing by a writer for *The London Daily News*, who holds that two-thirds of the persons admitted are unquestionably his inferiors. "While professed critics hold back," he adds, "the general public, if its view may be summarized, probably considers Coleridge as a person who took too much opium, was a trial to his friends, talked beautifully but unintelligibly, and by way of a dream wrote the 'Ancient Mariner' and the lines about the quarrel of Sir Leoline and his friend."

Wilkie Collins, in a recent most interesting letter to a friend in New-York (Mr. William Winter), who ventures to think that these excellent passages are too good to be kept to himself, refers as follows to his own recent novel and to his lately deceased literary comrade, Anthony Trollope: "The gout to answer your friendly inquiries about my health keeps away wonderfully so far, and this in spite of my 'vital power,' as the doctor calls it, having been severely taxed by my last story. When a man is 'old enough to know better' he generally commits some of his most flagrant indiscretions. This new book, 'Heart and Science,' so mercilessly excited me that I went on writing week after week without a day's interval of rest. Rest was impossible, I made a desperate effort: rushed to the sea; went sailing and fishing; and was writing my book all the time in my head," as the children say. The one wise course to take was to go back to my desk and empty my head, and then rest. My nerves are too much shaken for travelling. An armchair and a cigar, and a hundred and aiftieth reading of the glorious Walter Scott (King, Emperor, President and God Almighty of Novelists)—there is the regimen that is doing me good. All the other novel-writers I can read, while I am at work myself. If I only look at 'The Antiquary,' or 'Old Mortality,' I am crushed by the sense of my own littleness, and there is no work possible for me on that day. . . . You know Anthony Trollope, of course. His immeasurable energies had a bewildering effect on my invalid constitution. To me he was an incarnate gale of wind. He blew off my hat; he turned my umbrella inside out. Joking apart, as good and staunch a friend as ever lived, and to my mind, a great loss to novel-readers. Call his standard as a workman what you will, he was always equal to it. Never, in any marked degree, either above or below his own level. In that respect alone a remarkable writer, surely. If he had lived five years longer he would have written fifteen more thoroughly readable works of fiction. A loss—a serious loss, I say again."

There is a rumor that some of Mr. Andrew Lang's critical papers are to be reprinted here in a neat volume. Mr. Lang is one of the most accomplished scholars in England, and his prose, if it sometimes creaks with prejudice, is never other than interesting. In the effort to present a literary novelty one ingenious Frenchman has taken to the writing of long and elegant articles without once using *qui* or *que*. A new edition of Sir Theodore Martin's translation of Oehlenschläger's fascinating drama of "Aladdin" is coming out in England. Professor Austin Phelps has prepared a volume on "English Style in Public Discourse" with special relation to the usages of the pulpit. The work will shortly be brought out by Charles Scribner's Sons.

Mr. G. W. Cable has definitely relinquished his commercial occupations in New-Orleans and will venture forth a brave and already skilled sailor upon the enchanted sea of literature. Landmen and seamen alike will wish him favorable winds and a clear course by sun and stars.

There will shortly be sold in Paris the album containing the notes and sketches made by Alfred de Musset and George Sand during the celebrated but tragic journey to Italy they made together. There is a vast fund of drollery in the remarks and caricatures which refer to the excursion on board the steamer and the compulsory visit of the travellers to the Italian Custom House. Musset embellished the pages of his album with sketches in which some of his friends were hit off from the most satiric point of view.

The third edition of Bosworth Smith's "Life of Lord Lawrence" has appeared in England.

The author of the No Name novel ("Barrington's Fate") is discovered to be the English writer Mrs. Alfred W. Hunt. The book has been published in London under another title.

M. Turgenef's latest contributions to literature are his little prose poems entitled "Senitza." Many of these slight satirical trifles betray consuming indignation at human selfishness and ingratitude, tempered by compassion no less intense for the ignorance and stupidity in which, rather than in actual severity, it has its root. A man with white hands claims brotherhood with a knot of workmen. "Impossible," they rejoin; "your hands are white, ours are brown. Ours smell of tar; of what smell yours?" "Try." "The devil! they seem to smell of iron." "Even so. I have been six years in fetters for your sake." "Oh, so you would be a rebel, would you?" Two years afterward the workman meets another, and hears that the man with white hands is going to be hanged. "What say you, Brother Dmitry, could not one get a piece of the rope?" They say it is a lucky thing to have in the house." "True, true, Brother Peter; let us try." In other tales the moral is conveyed in a more ideal and poetical form—frequently not without pungent humor; as, when the poet, having penetrated behind the veil of Isis, finds the awful goddess of Nature occupied in perfecting the hind legs of a fœtus; or in the dialogues of the Junctur and the Finsstarshorn, where millennium after millennium the latter giant reports to the former the gradual dwindling and disappearance of the troublesome human insects who had for a time crept up to his base. One of the most amusing and not the least significant of this class is the parable of the Virtues in Heaven. Once upon a time, it is recorded, the Almighty was pleased to summon all the Virtues to a banquet. There they came, great and small. The little Virtues, it was observed, were generally more agreeable and attractive than the big ones; but all were very nice, and all comported themselves most decorously. The Supreme Being, however, remarked two who seemed strangers to each other. Leading one up to her sister, "Beneficence," he said, "permit me to make you acquainted with Gratitude." The Virtues stared. This was the first time they had met.

Books of the Week.

LITTELL'S LIVING AGE, Vol. 156. (Boston: Little & Co.) LIBRARIES AND SCHOOLS. Papers selected by Samuel S. Green. 16mo, pp. 128. (F. Leybold.)

HEROES AND HEROINES OF THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH. By W. H. Gibson. Ph. D. 12mo, pp. 332. (American Tract Society.)

HEALTH HINTS TO WOMEN. By Wilhelmine D. Schott. Square 12mo, pp. 319. (Charles P. Bowyer.)

THE SAILING BOAT AND ITS MANAGEMENT. By C. E. Prescott. 12mo, pp. 53. (Orange Judd Company.)

ROYAL GRACE AND LOYAL GIFTS. By Francis Ridley Peartree. 12mo, pp. 564. (Amos D. Randolf & Co.)

PROTECTION TO YOUNG INDUSTRIES. By F. W. Tansig. 12mo, pp. 69. (Cambridge, Mass.: Moss King.)

LIBRARIES AND READERS. By William E. Foster. 16mo, pp. 136. (F. Leybold.)

IN A NUTSHELL. Suggestions to American College Students. By Dr. S. A. M., M. D. 12mo, pp. 206. (Clarke Brothers.)

SELECTIONS FROM THE POETRY OF ROBERT BROWNING. With an Introduction by Richard Grant White. 8vo, pp. 265. (Dodd, Mead & Co.)

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